



RUNGE CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

HABITAT HAPPENINGS

January and February 2004

**SNOW, SNOW,
BEAUTIFUL SNOW,
STEP ON A HUNK
AND AWAY YOU GO!**

The origin of this little rhyme is unknown to me, but my dad always recited it at the first hint of a snowfall. It sums up most people's thoughts about snow – lovely, yet a nuisance and perhaps even hazardous. Away you go! To me it says lovely and FUN! Away you go to feel, explore, and see the world in new ways!

Snowflakes have unique structures. Winter is the season for snow. Snow is a good insulator for many hibernating animals and dormant plants. The moisture from snow is much needed by mother earth. These things we know.

Snow can be a nuisance, even hazardous. It is difficult to negotiate through snow on foot and it makes driving a challenge. The flow of goods and services is slowed by a snowfall. A heavy snow often causes damage to power lines and buildings. These things we know.







In addition to knowing about snow, I suggest we pause for a bit and feel it. Marvel at it. Let those unique snowflakes touch your face. Build a small snow fort and feel the insulating effect. Walk through the snow and feel the difference it makes to you and then imagine how animals have to adapt in order to negotiate through it. As you wait in traffic or in a line at the grocery store think about how many animals are trying to find their food through the snow. Snow makes the world an even more amazing place than it already is. Step outside at night and experience the peacefulness that descends upon the most desolate of places after a snowfall.

When it snows this winter, enjoy the beauty, recognize the benefits, marvel at the complexity, be aware of its force, have fun and away you will go!

—ROBIN GRUMM, Naturalist



Here are a few suggestions to get you going:

-  Stick your tongue out and catch the snowflakes as they fall.
-  Use a magnifying glass to look at a snowflake on the sleeve of a dark coat.
-  Make sculptures of animals or other objects out of snow and add natural items for details.
-  Play "Wolves In The Snow" by having one person assume the role of lead wolf. All the others are wolves that go in single file after the lead wolf, taking care to step exactly in the footsteps made by the lead wolf. Can you figure out how this way of traveling helps wolves to conserve energy?
-  Look for animal tracks in freshly fallen snow.
-  Take a night hike in the snow. You will be amazed at the brightness of the night. Listen for owls. Enjoy the winter constellations. Feel the peacefulness.



Volunteer News

TOP 10

Reasons to Become a Runge Volunteer:

10. You get to meet new friends with similar interests.
9. You get to learn about Missouri's fish, forests, and wildlife.
8. You get to meet and work with caring and dedicated people.
7. You get to enjoy kids, kettlecorn, pizza, and field trips.
6. You get to help people experience and understand nature.
5. You will have many outlets for your creativity and passion.
4. You can feel good about contributing to our community.
3. You get to try new things.
2. You get to make a difference in people's lives (maybe your own!)
1. It's fun!

Join our Volunteer team!

We will have a **Volunteer Open House** at Runge on January 15 from 7-8:30 PM for anyone interested in becoming a Runge volunteer. Come meet current volunteers and staff, and find out more about our volunteer program. You'll also be able to sign up for an interview. Training sessions will be every Thursday evening in February and March. If you'd like to find out more, contact Kevin Lohraff at 573.526.5544 or at Kevin.Lohraff@mdc.mo.gov



Waterfowl Decoy Workshop

Saturday, February 28, 2004

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Location: Charles A. Green Conservation Area

Whether it's sitting on a fireplace mantle or floating in the marsh, hand crafted waterfowl decoys are eye catchers and great conversation pieces. At this workshop, we'll provide you with the materials and knowledge to construct two different types of waterfowl decoys; silhouette goose and cork body duck. We'll also cover some waterfowl biology, migration, management and population status as well. We recommend that those attending the workshop bring a shop apron, 80 and 160 grit sandpaper, eye protection and a "sure form" tool if they have one. This program is free and open to those who make reservations to attend. **Reservations can be made by calling the Central Regional Office in Columbia, 573/884-6861 before February 13.** You will also be given directions to the Green area at that time. Attendance will be limited to 25, so call early. This is not a nature center program and will not be held at the nature center.



Exhibits January and February

"Varied Art Media to Express the Natural World"

William Woods University Honors Project and Exhibition

by

Professor: Terry Martin

Student: Sarah Williams



The nature of this project is a collaborative sharing of technique and personal expression. The project is also an effort to prepare documentation of creative processes for future teaching and public forums. The art pieces should provide encouragement and stimulation for people interested in art and nature. We hope those who see the exhibit will enjoy the diverse expression.

The uniqueness of this exhibit will be related to the inventive selection of art methods and materials. The goal is to show others the wonders of common materials used in creative ways.

Did you know?

■ **Some plants can function under at least twenty inches of snow. Snow transmits light. Spring beauties develop leaves and flower parts beneath the snow. The flowers of snow buttercups may open within the snow.**

RUNGE CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

is located in western Jefferson City. From U.S. 50, exit on Highway 179. Travel north for 1/4 mile to the Nature Center entrance on the left. The Nature Center is open Monday through Saturday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Noon to 5:00 PM on Sundays. Closed New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. No admission fee. PHONE: 573/526-5544 FAX: 573/526-4496
<www.mdc.state.mo.us/areas/cnc/>

JANUARY EVENTS at Runge

REGISTRATION

Call Runge Conservation Nature Center on or after December 1st to register for these free programs (573/526-5544.) If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list can attend.

10 Saturday

The Runge Hiking Club

Time: 8:00 AM - Noon Ages: 18 and older

See splendid sights! Learn about our wondrous state! Each month, we'll meet at the nature center, car pool to one of Missouri's choice hiking spots, and hike one or two of the best trails. A volunteer naturalist will lead the hikes and point out highlights as we go.

It's a Runge Hiking Club tradition! This month, we'll return to **Painted Rock State Forest** to hike the **Osage Bluff Scenic Trail** (1.6 miles), one of the most interesting and scenic trails in the state. We'll warm up by hiking on 140-foot-high bluffs, down to the river level, and back up for magnificent views of the Osage river valley. We'll see ancient cedars, view remnants of a Native American burial cairn, and have a 50/50 chance of spotting a bald eagle. Bring your lunch, water, wear hiking boots or comfortable shoes, and come dressed for the weather. Reservations required.

10 Saturday

Nature and Your Health Series - Outdoor Cures to Winter Woes

Time: 1:00 - 2:30 PM Ages: 18 and older

"Sunshine on my shoulders makes me happy..." With the holidays behind us and gray winter days upon us there's a tendency for some of us to get the "blahs." Learn about the symptoms of Season Affective Disorder and the cures that the outdoors has to offer. Join Psychotherapist Cynthia Kneibert and Naturalist Jan Syrgos for a discussion and guided hike to brighten your mood with the out-of-doors. Dress for the weather. We will walk one mile on moderate terrain at a leisurely pace. Reservations required.

Did You Know?

■ Like a deer's hair, dry fluffy snow insulates better than wet dense snow because dry fluffy snow contains more air.

15 Thursday

Wildlifers—Quilt Block

Time: 10:00 - 11:30 AM, 1:00 - 2:30 PM, 3:30 - 5:00 PM, and 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Ages: 50 and older

It's a new year—time for a new quilt! Birds of Missouri is the theme for the 2004 Wildlifers' quilt. What better way to start the year than with the bald eagle? Learn why this bird is no longer on the endangered species list, and make the eagle your first block for your new quilt. Reservations required.

15 Thursday

Birds and the Mississippi River

Time: 7:00 - 8:00 PM Ages: 18 and older

The Mississippi River is a critical place for the survival of many birds. Dan McGuinness, director of the National Audubon Society's Upper Mississippi River Campaign, will come from Minnesota to give a presentation on "Birds and the Mississippi River." He will share extensive information about birds and habitat issues along the Mississippi River, and tell about possible plans to locate a floating educational center in St. Louis. The program is co-sponsored by the River Bluffs Audubon Society. Reservations not required.

16 Friday

Owl Prowl

Time: 7:00 - 8:30 PM Ages: All

Join us as we learn about Missouri's owls, then, weather permitting, we'll head outside for a short hike on the nature center trails to see if we can spot an owl. Dress for the weather. Reservations required.

17 Saturday

Nature Notes: Snowflakes

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 PM Ages: All (Children accompanied by adult)

"How full of creative genius is the air in which these [snowflakes] are generated!", Henry David Thoreau wrote. "I should hardly admire them more if real stars fell and lodged on my coat." Snowflakes are unique reminders of all the beauty in nature. We'll be drawing in our nature notebooks what we see and recording what we feel about Missouri during winter, even if there is no snow on the ground. Reservations required.

18 Sunday

Where Do You Go When It Feels Like Snow?

Time: 3:00 - 4:00 PM Ages: All

Red Fox doesn't know what to do now that winter has come to Missouri. Other puppets like Monarch Butterfly, Eastern Chipmunk, and Ladybug Beetle explain how they got ready for cold weather, but none of these things suit the fox. Share Red Fox's quest for information as the Runge Puppeteers ask, "Where do you go when it feels like snow?" No reservations required.

20 Tuesday

Owl Prowl

Time: 7:00 - 8:30 PM Ages: All

Join us as we learn about Missouri's owls, then, weather permitting, we'll head outside for a short hike on the nature center trails to see if we can spot an owl. Dress for the weather. Reservations required.

FOR THE LITTLE ONES

Babes In The Woods Birth through 2 years of age

The Babes in the Woods program is taking time off. We will return in the spring with fresh new programs for the youngest among us. Watch for those dates in the March/April newsletter.

Little Acorns 3 through 6 years of age

Thursday, January 8 – 11:00 AM
Tuesday, January 13 – 10:00 AM
Tuesday, January 13 – 6:00 PM
Saturday, January 17 – 10:00 AM
Wednesday, January 21 – 1:00 PM
Saturday, January 24 – 10:00 AM

King of Birds

Missouri is the winter home for hundreds of bald eagles. What do they eat? How much do they weigh? How many feathers do they have? Where do they nest? Find the answers to these questions and more at our program this month. Reservations required.

Runge Reading Guild will not be held in January and February. Join us again in the Spring.

FEBRUARY EVENTS at Runge

REGISTRATION

Call Runge Conservation Nature Center on or after December 1st to register for these free programs (573/526-5544.) If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list can attend.

8 Sunday

Nature Notes: Considering the Paradoxes of Snow

Time: 3:00 - 4:00 PM Ages: All (children accompanied by adults)

Think about this. Snow hides some things yet reveals others. It is icy cold yet it insulates. Snow covers and conceals details on the ground and branches, yet it tells us where unseen creatures have been. Join us as we write and draw these and other "incongruities" we discover outdoors in Missouri during winter. Reservations required.

12 Thursday

Happiness is a Bluebird

Time: 7:00 - 8:00 PM Ages: 18 and older
Runge Nature Center volunteer Julie Lundsted will speak on "Happiness is a Bluebird—Lots of Bluebirds." Julie will share many tips on attracting bluebirds to your yard. She has personal experience with their favorite foods, daily habits, nest preferences, and antics. Learn how you too can help them survive! The program is co-sponsored by the River Bluffs Audubon Society. Reservations not required.

17 Tuesday

Animal Tails

Time: 7:00 - 8:00 PM Ages: All
Through the art of storytelling, Milton Gray engages young and old alike in his folk tales about native animals. Milton is an actor, playwright, singer, and storyteller from the Kansas City area. Join in the fun as Milton gets everyone involved in his games, songs, and dances. Reservations required.

19 Thursday

Wildlifers—Quilt Block

Time: 10:00 - 11:30 AM, 1:00 - 2:30 PM, 3:30 - 5:00 PM, and 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Ages: 50 and older

Have you ever wondered what that rat-a-tat-tat sound is when you are outside? We will have a program on Missouri's woodpeckers and assemble a woodpecker quilt block. Reservations required.

21 Saturday

The Runge Hiking Club

Time: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Ages: 18 and older

Many pioneers from Kentucky and Tennessee settled in the Ozark hill country, perhaps because the area reminded them of their Appalachian homeland. We'll explore some of this country in the Mark Twain National Forest and find a hidden natural tunnel on the **Kaintuck Trail** (6 miles) on the **Mill Creek Area**, which is owned by the U.S. Forest Service, Houston/Rolla District. We'll eat along the trail, so bring a small pack, your lunch, and water. Hiking boots are recommended for this trip. Bring a flashlight if you want to explore inside the tunnel. Also, come dressed for the weather. Reservations required.

22 Thursday

Owl Prowl

Time: 7:00 - 8:30 PM Ages: 18 and older

Join us as we learn about Missouri's owls, then, weather permitting, we'll head outside for a short hike on the nature center trails to see if we can spot an owl. Dress for the weather. Reservations required.

24 Tuesday

Who Eats Who-o-o?

Time: 10:00 - 11:00 AM

Ages: Homeschoolers - 7 and older
Owl pellets provide clues to the mysteries of the food chain. Learn what owl pellets are and dissect them to identify what's inside. Reservations required.

28 Saturday

Winter Woodland

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 PM Ages: All

It appears that your winter woodland is quiet and void of activity, covered in cold. But our mission is to uncover clues that there are indeed signs of life! Let's slip into our warm gear and hike Raccoon Run trail searching for tracks, scat, and signs that wildlife leave behind. Reservations required.

Nature Shop News

January/February featured item:

Native Landscaping for Wildlife & People

20% off

Heritage card discount does not apply.



FOR THE LITTLE ONES

Babes In The Woods *Birth through 2 years of age*

The Babes in the Woods program is taking time off. We will return in the spring with fresh new programs for the youngest among us. Watch for those dates in the March/April newsletter.

Little Acorns

3 through 6 years of age

Thursday, February 5 - 10:00 AM
Tuesday, February 10 - 10:00 AM
Tuesday, February 10 - 6:00 PM
Saturday, February 14 - 10:00 AM
Sunday, February 15 - 2:00 PM
Wednesday, February 18 - 2:00 PM
Friday, February 27 - 10:00 AM

Snowflakes

Snow, snow, beautiful snow - step on a hunk and away you go! Come with us as we go outside (hopefully) to play in the snow at Runge! We will "make" snow inside, too. Reservations required.

We will begin posting a **trail rating system** for the trails advertised for the Runge Hiking Club.

- Easiest trail—flat terrain with no obstructions (like the Katy Trail)
- Slight inclines and/or few obstructions (gravel, few rocks)
- Moderate inclines and/or occasional rocks or roots
- Occasional significant inclines and/or rocks or roots
- Most difficult—significant inclines, obstructions, and/or loose rocks

Conservation Kids' Club



Welcome to Conservation Kids' Club, a fun club created for kids 6 through 13 years old who love to explore nature and learn about wildlife. Come to one of these meetings and we'll sign you up.

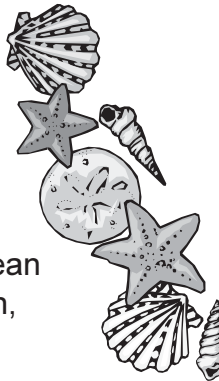
Beach Party

Tuesday, January 20

6:00 - 7:00 PM Pollywogs (Ages 6 through 8)

7:30 - 8:30 PM Bullfrogs (Ages 9 through 13)

Surf's up Dudes! Beat the winter blahs... wear your sunglasses and bring your beach towel for some fun in the sun! Learn how animals of the ocean compare to animals of Missouri. Tropical food, fun, and prizes.



Animal Tails

Tuesday, February 17

6:00 - 7:00 PM Pollywogs (Ages 6 through 8) and Bullfrogs (Ages 9 through 13) combine for this special performance!

Through the art of storytelling, Milton Gray engages young and old alike with his folk tales about native animals. Milton is an actor, playwright, singer and storyteller from the

Kansas City area. Join in the fun as Milton gets everyone involved in his games, songs, and dances.

Hey Parents!

While big brother/sister attends Conservation Kids' Club, your preschooler (3 through 5 years of age) can be involved in a program at the same time. Preschool programs are available for siblings of Conservation Kids' Club members on Tuesday, January 20, 6:00 - 7:00 PM and Tuesday, February 17, 6:00 - 7:00 PM. Refer to your **Treetop Chatter** newsletter for program descriptions. There are no reservations required.

Join us for

Holiday Happenings

December 26

10:00 AM-Noon - Crafts

1:00-1:30 PM - Fireside Stories

2:00 PM - Animal Feeding

December 27

10:00 AM-Noon - Crafts

11:00 AM - Symbols of the Season (hike)

1:00 PM - Puppet Show

1:30 PM - Fireside Stories

2:00 PM - Dulcimer Music

December 28

1:00-3:00 PM - Crafts

1:00 PM - Symbols of the Season (hike)

2:00 PM - Dulcimer Music

3:00 PM - Nature Journaling

No reservations required.

"Of all the forms of water, the six pointed crystals of ice called snow, that form in such quantities within the clouds during storms, are incomparably the most beautiful and varied."

—W. A. Bentley

Scouts

If you have a small den or troop, these evening programs are for you! Space is limited. Call **January 1st** to make your reservation.

Bird Elective Program - Scouts (2nd grade boys)

Wednesday, January 14 - 6:30 PM

Eco-Explorer Try-It Program - Brownies

Wednesday, January 21 - 6:30 PM

Bear Achievement #5 (Sharing Your World with Wildlife) Program - Scouts (3rd grade boys)

Wednesday, February 11 - 6:30 PM

Animal Try-It Program - Brownies

Wednesday, February 18 - 6:30 PM

Scout Packs Available Just a reminder . . . scout leaders can check out packs from the Runge Conservation Nature Center to help their groups work on badges.

The packs available include:

Wolf Cub Elective #13 - *Birds*

Cub Scout Achievement #5 - *Sharing Your World With Wildlife*

Brownie Try-It - *Animals*

Brownie Try-It - *Plants*

2004 Eagle Days



January 3 9 AM - 4 PM
January 4 10 AM - 4 PM

Willmore Lodge ~ Lake Ozark

Directions: Bus 54/W Bagnell Dam exit. Willmore Lodge is located on the right.

Sponsored by
the Runge
Conservation
Nature Center
and the
Lake Area
Chamber of
Commerce

- ◆ Wild eagle viewing sites with high-power scopes at the Bagnell Dam access and on the deck of the Willmore Lodge. Dress warmly.
- ◆ Live eagles and staff from World Bird Sanctuary at Willmore Lodge.
- ◆ Nature gifts will be for sale in Willmore Lodge.
- ◆ Eagle watch cruises on the Paddle Wheeler *Tom Sawyer* (conditions permitting) on Saturday at 11:00AM, Noon, 1:00PM, and 2:00PM. Cost \$4 per person. Sunday will be a rain date for cruises.

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HABITAT HAPPENINGS
Runge Conservation Nature Center
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